

THE REFORMER.

VOL. III.] PHILADELPHIA, OCT. 1, 1822. [No. XXXIV.

Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth. Jeremiah, v. 1.

MISSIONARY PLAN.

In these days of Missionary planning, if we might be allowed to devise a plan, it would be for every man to become a Missionary to himself, and proselyte himself to strict honesty, justice and truth. This may be done without raising any funds, or setting up Theological Seminaries; and if thoroughly and zealously engaged in by all who profess the Christian name, we venture to predict, that more good will be accomplished in a short time, than has ever yet been accomplished by all the Missionaries who have gone forth since the establishment of the famous *propaganda* at Rome.

Our country swarms with Missionaries and licentiates from Colleges, seeking a goodly living out of the people; but when we look around, to see the effects which are produced by their labours, we perceive mankind only getting worse and worse. To adopt the language of *Lyman Beecher*—"We now come to the question, what shall be done?" and we admit his answer in its fullest extent, "that something must be done; something more than ever has been done, or our land, will be ruined." Here we must leave Lyman Beecher; and instead of calling on the people to give money to set up Theological Seminaries, and educate 6,000 additional priests in order "to save their country from ruin, and to save millions of their countrymen from hell," we call on them individually, in the words of the prophet, to "*cease to do evil, and learn to do well.*" To defraud no man—to oppress no man—to deceive no man; but "*to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.*"

These are the best means which can be adopted for "the renovation of a world," so far as man can have any agency in promoting that glorious work. And if preachers in this day were as zealously engaged in enforcing these

duties, as they are in planning schemes to obtain funds for Theological Seminaries and Missionaries, and the people were as ready to do them as to give their money, we might then conclude, that the millennial state of the church would soon arrive.

Never will the state of things be any better, until each seeks to become good and righteous for himself. No man, in this country, needs a Theological student or a Missionary, to make known to him his faults, or direct him the way he should walk. The path of duty is sufficiently plain to every one; and if people would retire more to their closets, and go less to meeting-houses—and listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit, and hear less of the voice of Preachers and Missionaries, they would be more likely to come into a right state; and they would also receive more benefit when they did attend the ministry of such as are called to declare the counsel of God to men.

Meeting-houses are now so numerous, preachers and preaching so abundant, and people go to what is called worship in such a light and inconsiderate manner; and, above all, feel so little desire to become any better, that more injury than benefit, we fear, arises from what are called the means of grace. The mind becomes dissipated or bewildered under a multitude of outward services, rules and observances; and people have no opportunity to commune with their own hearts, and learn the true condition in which they stand.

What signified the *new moons*, the *appointed feasts*, and *calling of assemblies* among the Jews in the time of the prophet Isaiah? The Lord declared that *his soul hated them*—that they were a *trouble unto him*, and he was *weary to bear them*; and that even the *solemn meeting* was *iniquity*.

True sincerity and uprightness, are much more needed among us at this time, than Missionaries and Theological Seminaries; and if any more societies must be formed in this day, we hope, instead of being *mite, cent or rag-bag* societies, for the purpose of raising money, they will be societies to promote honesty, industry, truth and righteousness among men. Societies, in short, whose object shall be to bring people to do as they would be done unto; to be true to their engagements; upright in their dealings;

to cause them to avoid anger, ill-will and covetousness, and obey the commands and precepts contained in our Saviour's sermon on the mount. When we are brought into a compliance with these requirements ourselves, there will not be wanting among us, those who will be rightly concerned and endeavour to promote an observance of the same precepts and duties in other countries, without being paid for their services.

The Lord loveth a cheerful giver; and until men are willing to go forth to minister the word without being hired, and having the whole country put under requisition to furnish means, no real benefit can be expected to result from all that is done. Christ directed his disciples to give forth the gospel freely; and without obedience to this command, his presence and blessing will be looked for in vain. He will provide for those, who act in compliance with his will. To follow preaching as a trade, for the sake of a living, lets down the ministry to the level of any worldly art; and it is without force or effect in reforming the hearts of men. Christ has said, *the disciple is not above his master*, or teacher; and hence, were it even the case, that vast numbers were brought into the pale of the visible church by those who are now sent forth, it is not probable, that any advantage would be derived from it to the cause of christianity, or to the souls of men. Catholic Missionaries have done this, before the name of Protestant was known; and our Missionaries inform us what sort of converts they made, without perceiving that *they* proceed much in the same way. The Scribes and the Pharisees, were the first who compassed sea and land to make proselytes, without making them any better; since which time, multitudes have followed in the same line; while they have all believed they were doing much good, and that none but the enemies of the Lord would refuse to aid in the work.

We might pursue this subject much further, but we forbear. We have been governed by principle and the convictions of duty, in what we have said on this head, from time to time; and as most of our readers, we trust, are now able to form a pretty correct judgment with regard to many of the great undertakings of the day, we may occupy less room hereafter respecting such concerns,

and enter upon some things which have not yet come under review, of a practical kind, and to which we also desire correspondents to direct their minds. Against many of the plans of the present day, our publication at first stood almost alone: attention has since been awakened up, and several editors have engaged fearlessly in the cause, so that the public will no longer remain ignorant in regard to those schemes.

In conducting this work, we desire to keep on sure ground, and direct its aim to produce a better state of things: Hence, to weighty and important matters, we stand prepared to extend whatever aid is in our power. When things of this nature are plain before us, consequences we shall not regard.

[We are indebted to an esteemed correspondent in New Hampshire, for the essay from which the following extracts are made. It was printed in Glasgow, Scotland, 1810.]

“SIMON MAGUS AND SIMON PETER.”

“We have, in the 8th chapter of Acts, an account of those two ancient characters, and an interview between them. Simon Magus seems to have been a very extraordinary man, and exceedingly popular in a very eminent city, Samaria. The inhabitants, of all ranks, regarded him with high veneration, and had done so for a long time. At the time Simon Peter appeared in that city, Simon Magus seems to have been highly respected in a religious point of view; he was to them as an oracle of God, and seemed invested with power almost divine; he asserted his own dignity, and gained the ear of the people; so that all, from the least to the greatest, gave heed to him, saying, “this man is the great power of God.” One chief engine of his fame, was his power of working wonders, which others could neither explain nor imitate.

“Simon Peter was not a person of high renown, among such people as the inhabitants of Samaria. He was a low bred man, and his speech marked with a provincial vulgarity; he had been originally neither a prophet, nor a prophet’s son, nor a scribe, nor a pharisee, nor a doctor of the law, but men had taught him to take fishes from his youth. However, the Founder of Christianity, having all power in heaven and earth, had, by this time, made him

a successful fisher of men. He was, indeed, qualified for the work with wondrous powers. In particular, when, by divine guidance, he laid his hands on believers, they received the Holy Spirit, and were also endowed with wonder-working gifts. Previous to his arrival at Samaria, Philip, one of his friends, had preached the gospel there, and it had been confirmed with signs following. Hence, many believed the gospel, and acted under its influence. Simon Magus too, by the different nature and tendency of the wonders wrought, was overpowered into a profession of that gospel, which was so confirmed; he was still more astonished, when he observed the gifts of the Holy Spirit communicated, by laying on of the hands of Simon Peter, and others.

“Whatever knowledge of the truth he had thus attained, he still laboured under a great mistake. He thought that the teachers of christianity made a *trade* of it, and also that they acted by their own skill or power. Hence, as he could teach others to imitate his own miracles, he thought perhaps the apostles could do so too; and as he had no higher aim than the gaining of money, he thought they were like himself. Hence, he proposed to purchase the power. This proposal was so repugnant to the whole spirit of that system, which levels every mountain and exalts every valley; so hostile to the nature of a kingdom, not of this world, the king of which, voluntarily appeared in this world as an indigent dependant, and promised his subjects the same kind of treatment which himself had experienced; and so derogatory to the gift itself, which was not of temporal, but of eternal importance, that Simon Peter at once saw the character of the man, and the nullity of all his pretensions to christianity; and, filled with holy indignation, he thus reprehends him: ‘Thy money perish with thee, *because thou thoughtest the gift of God could be purchased with money.* Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter, thou art yet in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity; repent of this, thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps *the thought of thine heart* may be forgiven thee.’ At this reprehension, Simon Magus stood confounded and convicted; and requested an interest in the other’s prayers. Indeed, his sin seems to have been exceedingly heinous.

nous, and it did not so much consist in the single act of offering the money to the apostles, as in that erroneous state of mind from which this flowed. This reprehension, then, must apply to every act which betrays the same erroneous state of mind. Simon's sin consisted in the 'thought of his heart,' that money could purchase what was the gift of God.

"This error appears in two views. He is guilty of it, who thinks that any sum, however great, is of any avail to purchase such an enjoyment. He is equally guilty of this error, who thinks any sum, however small, absolutely necessary to the attainment; since '*without money, and without price,*' is the motto on them all.

"These principles may be brought to a practical application to office, or superiority in the church. I shall consider Simon's error, as it bears on these offices. Every office in the church, which has the warrant of God, is God's *gift* to the *person* invested with the office. Accordingly, the elders of the church of Ephesus are enjoined to take heed to the flock, over which the Holy Spirit had made them overseers. Acts xx.

"Now, whatever plan of church management puts this office within the reach of the person only who has money, or out of the reach of the person who has it not, must inevitably involve the error of Simon Magus. And every plan of church management, which renders such offices attainable by wealthy societies, and unattainable by those which are poor, renders this *gift* an article purchasable with money, and is also deeply tinged with the error of Simon.

"Passing over the case of churches of worldly connection, some of the strictest sects may be viewed, and will exhibit as follows: God *gave* to the church pastors, but for want of money, the poor little society cannot obtain the gift. Perhaps, they fix on an object, and present a call; if so, the question is, 'what salary?' If this be too little, the affair is ended. They cannot 'support the gospel,' and they shall not get it in that way. Suppose the pastor fixed, and the wealth of the society to fall into decay. Now that its purchase money, cannot be advanced, the gift of God is withdrawn: *i. e.* the pastor is loosed from his charge. A similar plan is observed, in the quan-

tity, and quality of the gift. These are distributed, as nearly as can be guessed, in the exact ratio of the wealth of the societies. One very poor, gets sermon but once a month; one a little more wealthy, may observe public worship three times a month; but it is often so contrived, that the most despised preacher is sent to the most despised society. While this is the case of poor societies, those which are wealthy have public worship every Lord's day, and may have a plurality of pastors, and those of the most esteemed and accomplished sort. Thus the poor society is frequently deprived of its pastor.

“A similar principle regulates the plans of many respectable places of worship. Among many classes, it would be reckoned an insult to seek or expect a pastor, unless the society can erect, or have erected a respectable edifice. If it be a dissenting society, a steeple and bells cannot be expected, because these are prohibited by the law of the land, (the establishment had rather exercise the office of bell-ringing for all the dissenters, than allow them to publish by bells, their sectarian existence.) But in all other respects, many dissenters seem to hold that a respectable house is essential to a christian congregation. Now, as a house cannot be built without money, this is but another mode of adopting the error of Simon. Besides, this lust for grandeur and respectability, involves a scriptural church in many difficulties. If an elegant house must be had, rich adherents become indispensable; or, if not rich, numbers must compensate. This leads to seek, by undue means, popularity, to accommodate, to truckle, and to please men by betraying the commandments of Christ. It leads to receive many applicants for admission, who ought to be rejected, and to retain many who ought to be excluded. It also binds up the hands of christians, that they cannot perform the good works of the gospel. What, by the law of Christ, belongs to the poor members of his body, is consumed on the lust for a fine house and respectability in the eyes of the vain world. When small christian societies ‘will thus be rich, (respectable,) they fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which tend to drown them (as churches) in destruction and perdition.’

“These hints claim the regard of many small societies, both among presbyterian dissenters, and congregational-

ists. If the above observations be well founded, it will follow, that the error of Simon Magus is deeply engrained, in all those ecclesiastical plans, which give church-offices for money, or money worth; in all those plans which make a previous course of human education, an essential prerequisite in a preacher, or pastor; and in all those which require the society, in all cases, to support the pastor, and forbid the pastor from engaging in wordly business, and in all which affect expensive meeting-houses. In a word, whoever is the absolute condemner of lay-preachers, and lay-pastors, must be the abettor of the error of Simon."

Extract from a communication in the Rhode Island Manufacturers' and Farmers' Journal, headed

MISSIONARIES.

"The late discussions in the newspapers, on the subject of Missionaries and their Societies, have induced me to reflect much on the probable utility of missionary efforts, whether at home or abroad, as also on the not improbable effects of the numerous establishments and endowments, made and making, for their support, on the political and religious privileges of future generations. The subject is, confessedly, one of vast importance, fraught with consequences of immeasurable weight to ourselves and our posterity; one on which no conscientious man will form a hasty conclusion, from partial or questionable evidence—yet it is one on which our minds should be properly and thoroughly enlightened, with a view to a steady and consistent course of conduct.

"In the discussion of this subject, it is not necessary, nor can it be consistent with christian charity, to impeach without direct evidence the motives of those who are most forward and eminent in the missionary cause. But we may, and ought to, form our own conclusions as to the practical benefits of missionary labours, and the character of the *means*, by which the devout of all denominations are induced to part with their property for the support of those labours. If no benefit is likely to result from them, or, if a benefit is promised from them, which benefit must be obtained by measures which are indefensible, then ought the whole plan to be aban-

doned. 'Ye shall not do evil that thereby good may come.'

"The missionaries ask us to contribute from the avails of our own hard labours, the means of supporting them in foreign countries and in the forests of our own country, for the purpose of converting unbelievers to the true faith. Without supposing them to be influenced by any improper motive, for so doing, it becomes our duty to inquire, first, whether they have a *divine command* to preach the gospel to the heathen—secondly, whether the aid which they ask is *necessary to the avowed object and justified by scripture authority*.

"Our Saviour, at the time of his glorious ascension, commanded his apostles to preach his word to all the nations of the earth. This was a special authority, which those who received it fulfilled by their travels and preaching,—and by the promulgation of the *scriptures of Divine Truth*.

"If the missionaries of the present day consider themselves included in the command of our Saviour, ought they not to be bound by the terms of that command? The first apostles were told to take neither purse nor scrip; and it was considered a proof of the truth of their special mission, that they were enabled to subsist themselves, without the aid of missionary funds. The Apostle Paul wrought daily with those among whom he sojourned, as did the other apostles. If then, this new commission be from God, it will and must prosper. If the missionaries have a special command, they need not our help. God will manifest Himself to them, wherever they may be, and under whatever circumstances of peril or privation. If, therefore, these new missionaries have a divine command, they are also forbidden to levy contributions here, for their own support in the countries which they are to christianize, and we are under no obligation by scripture authority to accede to their request. Let us now inquire whether any motives, less authoritative, should incline us to do so.

"Has experience shown, that the aborigines of this country or the worshippers of Brahma, in India, have reaped any benefit from a *tacit* acceptance of the doctrines of the missionaries? What are the results of the

pious labours of the Moravians among the savages of the forest? They have settled themselves into villages, built meeting houses and worshipped in them; contracted the vices of civilized life, and dwindled to nothing. The modern missionaries in India, have done no better than their predecessors, the Jesuits. The money spent in their support has been worse than wasted; it has been productive of positive evil to those for whose benefit it was intended.

“But what is to be the effect of these missionary establishments and endowments, on the moral, religious, and political interests of our posterity? The amount of property thus devoted must be immense, as we know that many societies have received, and are still receiving their thousands and tens of thousands, which are carefully vested, under the control of clergymen, by whom the income is distributed, for the education of the young and the maintenance of those in active life, *on condition that their interpretation of the scriptures shall accord with the interpretation of those who manage the funds.* What an inducement to a suppression of one's true belief! The influence stops not here. As controllers of immense money funds, these clergymen can influence, the politics and religion of the laity. Of all orders in state, power is most dangerous in the hands of the priesthood. In this respect there is no difference between them—Rome and Geneva, Gregory and Calvin, all should be watched. At the rate of the past and present endowments, the clergy of this class will have acquired, one century hence, the control of funds, greater in amount, than the present national debt. That their eyes are open to the immense power which such endowments, will give them, is apparent. The plan which some person, with more zeal than wit, lately published in Boston, is worthy of our attention. Though it shows great inexperience in the writer, it also discovers the dispositions and the calculations of people, more cautious and politic than he. With a fund of 748,000,000 of dollars which this writer supposes to be the tithe of the country, and therefore due, not to its parochial clergy but to the missionaries, by the Levitical law, he would raise an annual fund of \$34,000,000, for the support of a missionary army of 72,000 men, to be employed for the

salvation of souls, under the direction of education and missionary societies. This writer, and too many others in our country are missionary mad. I know of no parallel to this infatuation, but the state of the Anglo [English] Saxons, in the ninth century, and the facts detailed in the following extract from David Hume. Making the necessary allowances for that writer's well known prejudices in religious concerns, it will appear, that American freemen, of the 19th century are not much in advance of the ignorant and benighted Saxons.

‘The ecclesiastics, in those days of ignorance [when the Saxons had the rule in England] made rapid advances in the acquisition of power and grandeur, and inculcating the most absurd and most interested doctrines, though they sometimes met, from the contrary interests of the laity, with an opposition, which it required time and address to overcome, they found no obstacle in their reasoning or understanding. Not content with the donations of land made them by the Saxon princes and nobles, and with temporary oblations from the devotion of the people, they had cast a wishful eye on a vast revenue, which they claimed as belonging to them, by a sacred and indefeasible title. However little versed in the scriptures, they had been able to discover, that under the Jewish law, a tenth of all the produce of the land was conferred on the priesthood; and forgetting what they themselves taught, that the moral part only of that law was obligatory on Christians, they insisted, that this donation conveyed a perpetual property, inherent by divine right in those who officiated at the altar. During some centuries, the whole scope of sermons and homilies was directed to this purpose; and one would have imagined, from the general tenour of these discourses, that all the practical parts of Christianity were comprised in the exact and faithful payment of tithes to the clergy. Encouraged by their success in inculcating these doctrines, they ventured farther than they were warranted even by the Levitical law, and pretended to draw the tenth of all industry, merchandize, wages of labourers, and pay of soldiers; nay, some canonists went so far as to affirm, that the clergy were entitled to the tithe of the profits made by courtezans in the exercise of their profession. Though

parishes had been instituted in England by Honourable, archbishop of Canterbury, near two centuries before, the ecclesiastics had never yet been able to get possession of the tithes : They therefore seized the present favourable opportunity of making that acquisition ; when a weak, superstitious prince filled the throne, and when the people, discouraged by their losses from the Danes, and terrified with the fear of future invasions, were susceptible of any impression which bore the appearance of religion. So meritorious was this concession deemed by the English that, trusting entirely to supernatural assistance, they neglected the ordinary means of safety ; and agreed even in the present desperate extremity, that the revenues of the church should be exempted from all burthens, though imposed for national defence and security.' ”

From the Miltonian.

The following curious article is copied from an eastern magazine, and appears to be intended as a caution to those who are willing to give, and a hint to those who are too ready to receive. The fact is, that an extensive system of fraud has been commenced, founded upon the known charitable feelings of the people, which like every thing else that is carried to excess, has produced a re-action that is spreading from Maine to Georgia. The influence that is practised in families directly and indirectly, supported by specious imposture, has roused a spirit of inquiry that will not be satisfied without full and open examination, and exposure of the whole subject. The ground is a dangerous one, and he who couches upon it must expect not only a powerful open opposition, but a secret hostility by far more dangerous. The machinery of the system has been got up with great labour and industry, and will be maintained with a pertinacity, that will neither easily nor speedily be overcome,

A SERMON UPON GOATS.

“ And thou shalt have goats’ milk enough for thy food, for the food of thy household, and for the maintenance of thy maidens.”—Prov. xxvii. 27.

From the days of Origen, (in the second century,) to the present, it has been fashionable to spiritualize the scriptures, and to teach men that they have a meaning besides what is expressed. Many, to this day, think the scriptures have a double sense, what is said, and what is meant. A man who could find a spiritual meaning to

Sampson's bee-hive, jaw-bone, and the tails of his three hundred foxes, connected with fire-brands, could doubtless find a spiritual meaning to our text. What could it be? We will suppose it to be this!—

1. The person addressed must mean a minister of modern times, to whom it is said, "And thou shalt have goats' milk enough," &c.

2. His household and maidens must signify, in the spiritual sense, his family and domestics.

3. The goats must mean the non-elect, who are in the end to be eternally miserable, after feeding the minister and his family for life, according to Matt. 25, &c.

4. The goats' milk, in the spiritual sense of the text, which is represented as abundant, must mean the generous and constant support, which these ministers, their children, and servants, have received from the non-elect, or such as are declared to be of that number, who do so well for their owners here, and who are to be treated so cruelly hereafter.

We will allow that the three first propositions are so plain, that they need no illustration, and proceed to prove the truth of the fourth particular; "*Thou shalt have goats' milk enough.*" It is a fact beyond all dispute, that those who are considered the unconverted, or non-elect, are generally depended on for the support of such as have for years been considered ministers of the gospel. The meeting-houses are chiefly built with the money which belonged to such as are denominated goats; and were it not for this part of the people, what a poor condition the sheep would be in!

It is a curiosity, the manner in which the goats' milk is obtained.

Money is wanted to make the parson life-member of the Bible Society;—the goats must be milked, and soon the ladies produce the money. A pious young man presents himself, as one called into the ministry, but is not able to obtain an honourable education at *Waterville*, *Providence*, or *Cambridge*. Milk the goats is the next step: men, women, and children are called, and the help is *stripped* from them, and the pious young men have goats' milk enough.

Missionaries are needed among the heathen in *Ver-*

mont, *Maine*, and *Rhode Island*. The goats are milked again, and the missionaries spreading their fame in all directions. A brother clergyman is dismissed, "because no man has hired him;" the goats are milked, and he is on a mission at twenty or fifty dollars per month.

A mission is agreed on in Asia, and the goats are resorted to, who support the friends for twenty-four years; at last all this fails, and what next? Mr. *Ward* appears, and tells the owners of the goats, nothing can be done unless a college is built in Asia, and some of the natives made ministers.—The goats are called up, and ten thousand dollars are collected; the goats are left to feed on the high hills, until another milking time returns, when their empty pails are again presented, to be replenished from the same source.

These milking vessels are placed wherever the goats are likely to resort—as in the *bureau*, on the merchant's counter, in the *Museum*—for this purpose, to milk out the abundance of these milch-kine. They have drawn from the goats, money, hats, shoes, stockings, shirts, and gowns, sweetmeats, and other luxuries, with *missionary fields*, corn, potatoes, cabbages, pumpkins, &c. &c.

All these things have been done, in addition to *stripping* for watch-seals, and the estates of old bachelors and maids, when death shall put an end to their wants.

According to modern pulpit doctrine, these poor goats are to be rewarded for all their milk, (so good for the elect,) with a portion with the devils and damned souls, in eternal misery, where they shall see the "*very elect*," who are fed upon their milk, and by it nourished, and prepared for glory everlasting.

For the Reformer.

Messrs. Editors.—Having travelled much through the United States, and observed the state of society in general, I have been induced to make a few reflections on the priestly order of the day. In taking a survey of the different Theological Seminaries in this country, it appears, great numbers of young men are preparing to teach mankind their duty, and point out to them the way of salvation. Now, it is very questionable, whether these young men have come into this way themselves. For had they

come into this way, it can hardly be supposed, they would submit to be supported year after year on the charities of the people. The Apostle Paul was so deeply concerned not to be chargeable to any, that he laboured with his own hands to provide for his support: but how far removed from such a disposition are these theological students! To suppose such men will be of any use to the cause of Christ or the souls of men, betrays as great blindness and ignorance, as can be found in any country under the influence of Papal superstition. The Apostles and primitive labourers in the Lord's vineyard, preached the gospel freely, being expressly commanded so to do by their divine master; but not a single individual among all these numerous students of theology, has any intention of obeying this command; and hence, their whole lives will only be one continued scene of rebellion against the authority of Him, whose cause and interest they profess to be engaged in to promote. In proportion to the increase of such teachers will true christianity suffer injury. Look through the whole of the Bible, and the history of the church down to the present day, and it will be seen, that false teachers have been the principal instruments in destroying true religion, and corrupting mankind. Under the Old Testament dispensation, to *prophecy for pay* and *divine for money*, was a sure mark of a false prophet, whether he prophesied in the name of the Lord or of Baal.

Our Saviour cautioned his followers against false teachers—calling them *wolves in sheeps' clothing*; and if we are to believe his words, an hireling careth not for the flock, whatever professions he may make: it is the fleece about which he is concerned. Christ told Peter to *feed* his flock; but how many of the teachers of this day only *shear* them; unless it can be called feeding them to discourse on dry-points of theology, and inculcate sectarian principles. The Apostle Paul knew that there was a crown of life laid up for him; but I cannot find what reward these men will have, except what men bestow. They learn the art of preaching, in the same manner as a mechanic learns his trade—by means of an apprenticeship. They follow it, also, for the same reason that a mechanic follows his employment—for the sake of a liv-

ing; and a shoemaker or a blacksmith has just as good a right to expect *a crown of life* for working at his business, as these men for reading sermons or preaching. Both have the same end in view: and there is as much christianity in one of the employments as the other.

Gain and traffic are not less hateful to God in the christian church, than in the temple at Jerusalem. And as our Saviour, during his outward manifestation, went into the temple and drove out the buyers and sellers, and overthrew the tables of the money changers—charging them with making his father's house a den of thieves: so will he come, ere long, in his spiritual manifestation, and drive out of his church all merchandising teachers—put an end to buying and selling in things pertaining to his worship—and overthrow all the schemes and institutions now established, to draw money from the people, under pretence of saving the souls of men. The whole system is no better than cheating and knavery; and to pronounce those who have put these things in operation, and are still carrying them on, a den of thieves, would not be less appropriate, than when applied to the buyers and sellers in the Jewish temple. At that time all was done under pretence of promoting the worship of God, and to furnish offerings and sacrifices for the service of the Lord.

To think to obtain the gifts of God or save the souls of men by means of money, betrays the ignorance of Simon Magus; and it is to be feared, that too many who are as ready to go forward in the service of the gospel, as that famous deceiver of the people, are in the same state he was. Among salary ministers, where can any be found, who will not leave the flock at one place and go to another, provided they are offered more money: thereby proving that they are hirelings, in the proper sense of the word—and will work where they can obtain the highest wages. Who ever knew one of these men to say his salary was too large, or refused to receive more if offered to him! Money, and the friendship of this world, it is their study to obtain. They visit the rich and honorable in their sickness, with all readiness of mind, and attend their funerals on their decease, but if called on to perform these offices of kindness to the poor, they have many excuses to make; yet they would have us to believe,

they are the ministers and followers of Jesus Christ : and thousands look up unto them, to be instructed and guided in the way to heaven. It is by reason of the multitude of such men, that there is so little true religion in the world ; and until people come out from under their influence, and judge and act for themselves, it cannot be expected there will be any change for the better. JOHN.

For the Reformer.

Since the days of Constantine, when the popular current ran in favour of christianity, and the princes of this world made it the fashionable religion of their courts, thousands in every age have become its professed votaries, and assumed its principles without experiencing their effects. The consequence has been, that genuine christianity and practical holiness, have almost ceased amongst men.

If we take an impartial survey of the state of things at the present time, we shall perceive that the number of true christians is very small. Most professors receive their tenets from tradition, and have all they know respecting religion conveyed to them by learned doctors, who preach or read what is called a sermon, before large audiences, on whom they are dependant for the enjoyment of their places and their living ; and therefore find it their *interest* and seek to please them, in the same manner as a mechanic employed to do a job of work, endeavors to do it well and suit the taste of his employers, in order to keep his situation or secure further business. Can such preaching be of any avail ? Does the preacher deliver the truths of the gospel, or will his preaching minister grace to his hearers ? Has he been redeemed from the world, or can he say to his auditors—follow me as I follow Christ !

Spending several years in a theological school, and having license or ordination from men, is but a poor qualification for teaching the important concerns of religion. Such teachers not being sent of God, will neither profit the people, nor advance the interests of christianity. This subject is an interesting one, and it appears increasingly so of late, when the poor are oppressed to support learned Rabbies, and numerous societies are formed in all parts

of our country, calling on the people for vast sums of money, under pretence of promoting the cause of the Redeemer. How unlike the way of the Apostles, and others of that day, are such proceedings! The apostles and primitive disciples went every where preaching the word, without fee or reward. They coveted no man's silver, gold, or apparel. Yea, Paul, that eminent and successful apostle to the Gentiles, ministered to his own necessities, and to those that were with him, by labouring with his own hands, that he might not be chargeable to any; thereby setting an example of that disinterestedness and love to the souls of men, which the spirit of the gospel will ever impart.

SILAS.

New Mission Society proposed.

[We have not thought proper to make our paper a vehicle for Missionary projects of any kind, but as a Correspondent has proposed one something out of the common line, we have concluded to lay it before our readers.]

For the Reformer.

Messrs. Editors.—Among the many objects of modern missionary societies, one certainly not the least important has as yet been overlooked; and perceiving this omission, I have been induced to notice the subject in your publication.

It is proposed, therefore, to institute a Mission Society for the purpose of despatching missionaries to the ARCHBISHOPS and BISHOPS of Europe, in order to reform and reduce within the principles of religion, morality and economy, that vast and cumbrous body of European clericals. I would recommend that such society be *Foreign*, limited to foreign objects. For, although the Bishops of the United States are verging fast in general conduct, to those of Europe, yet at present their numbers are too small, and their stipends too circumscribed. to be that very dronish set entirely as they are found to be elsewhere. To be sure it may be remarked, that, although my family has resided in this city little short of one-fifth of a century, and are regular church-going folks, yet in all that time, we have never been favoured with a single call or visit from the Bishop to inquire into our religious state, and it is believed but a single call from a priest during all that time;

yet we nevertheless have reason to believe, that the state of the good folks of Europe is so much worse than our own in this respect, that it would be desirable to direct the attention of the proposed society to that quarter where the need is greater.* It may be too, that even *the name* of my family may be unknown and strange to the ears of our Right Rev. Bishop, who no doubt was appointed by our Church, in her wisdom, for higher and greater purposes than that of visiting unknown or obscure individuals; still, as our fathers in God in the United States do not require tythes or forced contributions at our hands; so we excuse the smaller omissions of not being visited, or not having our spiritual condition inquired into by these our spiritual fathers.

Not so, as is well known, of these "*Downy Doctors, fattening in the stalls of theology*" in Europe generally—they seem so far sunk in the depths of indolence, in the possession of such masses of wealth, and in the total neglect of the most plain and practical duties respecting the flocks under their spiritual and pastoral charge, that some reclaiming measures seem indispensable to bring them back to the original fold of the church, and to wipe away the stigma arising from so great lack of proper industry and attention.

* *Note by the Editors.*—The following paragraph from the *Liverpool Mercury*, exhibits the most shocking degeneracy in certain Irish Prelates, the first of whom we believe received 60,000 dollars annually, while absent from the duties of his office.

"In a letter to the Right Hon. Wm. C. Plunkett on the subject of Irish tithes, by an Irish landlord, published some time ago, there is the following passage: 'The Established Clergy of Ireland have been profusely eulogised in Parliament. I do not sit down to write a satire or an invective; but we cannot forget that in our memory, a Prelate possessed of the richest bishopric in the kingdom never put his foot upon it for the space of twenty years, and went about on the continent, as I have been informed, declaiming every where against the Christian religion. Another was of such notorious profligacy, that *****, and he is said to have been finally shot on Hounslow Heath, by some one whom he attempted to rob.' "

A late paper states another instance of high misdemeanor in a "right reverend" Irish Bishop, whose income from his bishopric exceeds 15,000 pounds sterling per annum. Being arrested by the magistracy, and obtaining bail, he has fled to Hamburg to escape the sentence of the law.

To be sure, many of these "downy doctors" are, what is termed "very good sort of folks"—live well, enjoy all the good things of this life, and are completely at their ease; but, methinks that they hardly follow the example of Paul the apostle, who wrought with his own hands, following his lawful occupation of tent-maker.

After a *foreign* mission society shall have been established, some proposals will be made for a domestic mission society, to be exclusively devoted to the reclamation of the reverend clergy here.

We have heard of several instances of late, going to prove that these men are making merchandise of the gospel—their principles, therefore, should be tested by the standard of the gospel. Thus, in our days, we have seen an eminent lawyer abandoning his legal pursuits, and accept the tempting salary of five thousand (Spanish) to preach smooth things in a sister city.—In another instance, a more youthful sprig of divinity has been known to abandon the office of satellite to the visible head of the church here, our good bishop, and to take up his abode among the Dutch, in their chief city in the interior, because the *wages* paid here were less than those offered to him whither he has gone.

A third case is said to have occurred here, in which our youthful mechanical divine, we are informed, has abandoned house-keeping, by reason of his salary (only two thousand Spanish) being insufficient to confer on him a sufficient portion of the pomps and vanities of this wicked world; for it could not be pretended that two thousand Spanish were not sufficient for a handsome maintenance.

Another instance is said to have occurred in one of our hoary veterans of the class of "divines"—in which, as the tale is told, the expenditure exceeded the income, and a compromise with creditors was resorted to, because the number of *Spanish* allowed as wages, was inadequate to the demands of the worldly gratifications of this aged mercantile minister.*

Finally, some attempts have recently been made to collect monies to form a fund for the independent sup-

* *Note by the Editors.*—Some of the statements in this communication rest upon the responsibility of the writer; but we pledge ourselves, if there be any inaccuracy, to correct it in a future number.

port of our good bishop and his successors. A more erroneous measure could not be devised than this—going to place over us, a man whose conduct would be all but above control or examination, and who would act, or *might* act, in defiance of the holy church, or all its members.

All these cases will properly come within the supervision of our contemplated domestic clerical mission society.

“*Stat Nominis Umbra.*”

Extract from a communication in the New York Christian Herald, headed, “A Complaint against the People.”

“I do fear that in most instances, a congregation receives and enjoys its minister with almost no *serious* regard at all. He is a sort of necessary man to make up a respectable village, and a connexion with a respectable congregation, is considered by every respectable citizen as an indispensable part of individual and family character, and dispels the dread which most men feel at the thought of having no religion. Nor is this all:—There is not merely an improper feeling in regard to the ministerial relation, but quite as manifestly in regard to the sort of minister which the congregations and the individuals which compose them wish for themselves. The disposition to be caught and fascinated by prompt and ready talents;—the desire to have, in vulgar phrase, ‘a smart man,’ i. e. a splendid and showy man; evince a lamentable depravity of taste, and a still more lamentable depravity of moral feeling.”

[The above exhibits a pretty correct portraiture of the times.]

Tythes contended for in a Presbyterian publication.

We congratulate our readers on the circumstance, that the cloven foot of priest-craft begins more and more to uncover itself. It has all along, in this country, been in a great measure concealed; and few could believe the priesthood among us, had such objects in view, as are now manifesting themselves. We extract the following from a Presbyterian periodical work, printed in Wilmington, Delaware, that our readers may know the chains and fetters which some would fasten upon them, by subjecting us to the same tything system which prevails in England:

“The Priesthood of the Christian Church exercises its ministry by *Divine appointment*. And, therefore, they are *Ambassadors of Christ*, to deliver God’s message to all men. Hence it is that we are enjoined to esteem them very highly, in love, for their works sake. We should, according to St. Paul, receive them *as angels of God*, and with as much honor and respect, as Princes receive and entertain foreign Ambassadors.

“The Sovereign Head of the Church has provided for the maintenance of the Christian Ministry—even as he did for the Levitical

Priesthood. St. Paul argues, that as the Priests, who served at the altar, lived of the altar: so they, that now preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel. And this by the special ordinance of Christ, who hath so appointed, that the same proportion of a *tenth part*, which was paid to the Levites and priests under the Law, is still due to the Priesthood and Ministry of the Gospel.

"To me, then, it appears evident that at least a tenth part of our increase is due to God. Because tythes were annexed to the Priesthood of Christ typified by Melchizedeck, who was a type of Christ. And from Melchizedeck's receiving tythes from Abraham, the Apostle infers the excellency of Christ's Priesthood, above the Levitical—both because Abraham himself, from whom Levi descended, paid him tythes and was blessed by him—and because the Levitical Priests that received tythes were subject to death; *but here a High-Priest receives tythes, who lives forever*. In all which it is taken for granted, that *tythes* are annexed to Christ's Priesthood, otherwise the whole reasoning were impertinent and to no purpose. Now, if tythes are due to our high Priest, who *lives forever*, there cannot be any question, but the Priests and Ministers of the Gospel, whom Jesus Christ hath made his *Stewards*, and whom he hath sent as his *Ambassadors*, even as his Father sent him, ought, *in his right*, to receive, and to them the people ought to pay their tythes as to Christ, to whom they belong. For Christ having ordained a maintenance for the Ministers of the Gospel, and no other certain maintenance being specified, the payment of tythes remains obligatory. That the *tenth* is due, by *Divine right*, hath been the judgment of the Christian church in all ages, testified in several councils, and acknowledged generally by the Fathers, and ought to be sufficient to sway the judgment and settle the conscience of private persons.

"Wherefore, let him that is taught in word, communicate to him that teacheth, in all good things. Thus are we not only to obey them in spiritual things, but to minister to them in temporals. For good dispensers of the word and ordinances ought not to be rewarded with great esteem only, but with earthly benefits too, that they may not be left sad and anxious in the want of the means to defray their charges, but may also rejoice in the ready obedience of their flocks in all things. 'Know ye not, that they who minister about holy things, live of the things of the Temple:—and they who wait at the Altar, are partakers with the Altar? even so, hath the Lord ordained, that they who preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel?' Thus we see, that it is God's ordinance, which provides for the maintenance of the Clergy, and not merely our benevolence. We are not, according to his ordinance, at our own liberty; but bound to the support of the Christian Ministry, by a *positive Divine ordinance*. God hath given his Ministers power to demand their support as their *just due*. And, indeed, it is but reasonable, 'If they have sown unto us spiritual things, that they should receive from us a part of our carnal things.'

"Wherefore, God saith, 'Bring ye all the Tythes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the win-

dows of Heaven, and pour out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.' PHILO."

We hope this writer will go on to enlighten our minds on the subject of *tythes*, and other matters relative to the priesthood, as he has already done. For if any thing will be able to open the eyes of people, to see the deplorable pass to which things have already arrived among us, the communications of this writer will, we think, do it. We shall in a future number notice some other things contained in his learned researches. We leave our readers to make their own comments on what we have already given; observing only, if a few more would come out publicly with such plain and distinguished colours as this writer, before people in this country get any more blinded, Priestcraft would fall, like *Dagon* before the *Ark*, without our raising a hand to effect its overthrow.

The editor of the *Boston Recorder*, in a piece headed "*A stir in the Enemy's Camp*," observes :

"We have long been expecting opposition; open, avowed, resolute and violent in its character. Satan hates nothing more perfectly, than a pious and learned ministry; and his present activity furnishes sure evidence that his defeat is not far distant."

It is the conductors of some periodical works, that the editor calls the *Enemy's Camp*; and the learned and money-making clergy that he considers about to obtain a complete victory over them. Whether this is to be done by getting legislative power on their side, or by the hordes of clergymen from their Theological Seminaries, influencing the public mind, we have yet to learn. Now we think the editor is much mistaken, in supposing that Satan has such a hatred towards our learned clergy; we believe them to be his very best agents—and that he would not wish, in any wise, to lessen their influence, or hurt a hair of their heads. It is by means of great, high minded, and money-seeking clergymen, that he has always been enabled to carry on his persecution of the righteous, and oppose the true church. Hence, such men may rest perfectly easy, in regard to any thing Satan will do against them. If they have no other opposition than what comes from that quarter, their power and influence will remain forever.

The editors of the *National Intelligencer* have had to answer for themselves, in consequence of the remarks contained in their paper as introductory to the piece from the *Columbian Register*, and for expressing their sentiments respecting theological education, &c. The following is from their reply to a writer in behalf of the priesthood, in the *Charleston Courier* :

"That to which we have thought it proper to direct the attention of our readers as a matter worthy of inquiry, is not the compensations of clergymen, but the reasonableness of the establishment of a class of pensionaries on public bounty, under the seducing guise of giving support to religion. The Charleston writer affects to consider us as objecting to the application of money to the purposes of education. He must excuse us for saying that this interpretation of our views is affectation merely.—We would consent to a tax on the income of all the people of the Union for

the promotion of education, were such a tax for that purpose constitutional. Education, useful education, elementary education, is one thing; and theological education is another and very different thing. Theological education is to the clerical profession precisely what the study of the law is to the lawyer. What would be thought of a proposition to get up public subscriptions, and to solicit donations and legacies, not to support professorships but to maintain young men as beneficiaries in the study of the law! There are few students of law whose studies turn so much to their worldly advantage as do those of the Theological Students. In the commencement of the lawyer's professional career, he has difficulties and disappointments to encounter, which the clergyman wholly escapes. The gown of the clergyman protects him from almost all the vexations of life, and exempts him at least from the danger of want. Of all the professions in society, the clerical is most favored, and least requires the aid of public charity to support itself. Salaries of three and four thousand dollars are of rare occurrence in civil life, besides that, where they do occur, they are connected with duties far more onerous [burdensome] and responsible, in human acceptation, than those of the regular clergy.

"Our general objection, in short, to the maintenance of theological students at the cost of the savings and privations of the humbler classes of society, is, that it increases the number of that class of men who live by the labor of others. If pensions are to be bestowed from public charity, our impression is, that the octogenary pauper, whose hands refuse to labor, and 'whose trembling limbs scarce bear him to your door,' is a more fit subject for public benevolence, than the vigorous and athletic youth of twenty, who seeks by public charity to qualify himself to fill the functions of the ministry, preferred perhaps because misconceived by him to be a life of ease and irresponsibility, as well as dignity.

"This subject is one which has been gradually growing in importance, until it has arrived at a magnitude which attracts attention and inquiry.— This inquiry, so far from being objected to, will be met with pleasure by religious persons, because examination is the test of truth. In seeking information on the subject, we have been surprized at learning the amount of benevolences which appears to be annually employed in the United States for missionary and other associated religious purposes. We are under the impression that it does not fall far short of half a million of dollars per annum. If equivalent benefits result from it, in the promotion of the morals or even of the happiness, of our countrymen, the money is well expended. But we shall be glad to receive, and shall publish with pleasure, an authentic account of the benefits rendered for this expenditure, to which not only the wealthy but the indigent, not only the adult but the infant, in many parts of the country at least, contribute their mites."

A writer in the *Christian Repository* of Sept. 21, after the following words: "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?" proceeds to place on the list of 'enemies of the Cross' and 'opposers of religion,' all those who have the independence to give a just representation of what he calls "the benevolent works of the day." This method, however ingeniously devised, will produce as little effect on us as commendation, in regard to the course we shall pursue. We are not so solicitous to obtain the applause of men, by taking part in the priestly schemes of the day, as to be prevented from discharging our duty, by exhibiting the pomp and pride manifested in associations formed professedly to promote the work of the Lord.

*** "BLAIR," after some delay, will be attended to. "ALPHA," on Religious Worship in this City, will appear in our next number. The communication, which has reference to the publication entitled "The Pulpit Made Free," is postponed for want of room.